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The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Letter dated 5 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to my previous letter, dated 28 June 2007, I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the forthcoming "presidential elections" to be held on 19 July 2007 in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were urgently distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 27, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Agshin **Mehdiyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 5 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Baky, 5 July 2007

According to reports circulated by the mass media outlets of the Republic of Armenia so-called "presidential elections" are being arranged to take place in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 19 July 2007.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan reiterates in this regard that the unrecognized separatist regime in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan represents nothing but an illegal structure established by Armenia on the basis of ethnic cleansing of the Azerbaijani population. The so-called "elections" are conducted in order to camouflage the annexation policy of Armenia and are aimed at consolidation of the results of the continued occupation of the Azerbaijani territories.

Conduct of such "elections" gravely violates the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the norms and principles of international law, since they are held in the absence of the original Azerbaijani population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, and, therefore, shall have no legal effect whatsoever.

Any kind of elections in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan may be recognized as fair and free once the expelled Azerbaijani population takes full, direct and equal part in their conduct in a lawful and democratic environment equally to the Armenian population of the region. Holding such elections will be possible after the withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces, normalization of life in the region, creation of necessary conditions for restoration of the dialogue and cooperation between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of Nagorno-Karabakh. These steps will open up the possibility for the elaboration of an autonomy model for the Nagorno-Karabakh population within Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan calls upon the Armenian side to stop its destructive practice of illegal steps, which does not have any prospects, and instead to demonstrate goodwill and take a constructive position in the negotiation process in order to find, as soon as possible, a durable solution to the conflict on the basis of the norms and principles of international law.